

Eisenhower Desires To Support Kennedy

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Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower seems to be vigorous and in the best of health and spirits and is leading a busy life. He is an early riser and is in his Gettysburg office by 10 minutes of eight every morning. He does not give personal interviews and does not want to be quoted directly. However, he has no objection to background stories, as he describes them.

Therefore, any patient and diligent reporter, who is a good listener, can get a sound idea of his views.

First, it is clear he desires to support President Kennedy and not criticize him on his policies, especially those dealing with the foreign situation. He does not want to be a second guesser, but he does reserve the right to differ with the administration after events have become history or when he thinks the President is wrong on domestic matters.

On Cuban Plan

He felt that the Cuban plan was a good one, but he was unhappy that it was not successful as are most Americans including the President. Preparations were started during his administration, but no plan of operation had been devised. The work comprised merely the collecting and training of refugees in camps. The military plan was developed after he left the White House. He feels that, if the United States were going to support the invasion, those in charge should have made sure of its success.

He does not point his finger at any one man as being responsible for its failure, since he does not know enough about what went on behind the scenes.

He is a little sensitive about the U-2 spy plane incident, but feels sure he was right in the course he took. When these planes went on their flights depended on the weather, because there was no use making one if the cloud cover prevented photography. He probably did not know the exact date on which Powers took off on his disastrous trip which ended in his capture. He believes the pilot had been carefully screened by the CIA before he was hired. Those who supported this project did not feel there was much risk involved. The flights had been going on successfully for 36 months or more.

Rejected Theory

Most of Gen. Eisenhower's advisers thought that even if a plane should be shot down, the Russians would not acknowledge publicly the spying had been taking place. This theory did not appeal to him, and it turned out he was right in his conclusion, although he points out the Russian people still have not been told of the latest series of atomic tests.

Another protection against being caught was an automatic device in the airplane which would destroy it completely and kill the pilot if hit or it fell below a certain altitude. This evidently did not work. Gen. Eisenhower realized the project was a great gamble, but felt the results warranted the risk.

Mr. Khrushchev knew about over-flights when he was in the United States and stayed with Gen. Eisenhower at Camp David. He mentioned them, but did not seem to be particularly indignant. After the U-2 plane and its pilot, Capt. Gary Powers, were captured, Gen. Eisenhower believed he had to acknowledge he was aware of this project, otherwise the American people would believe he was asleep at the switch and did not know what was going on. This was his own decision and was not due to the advice of any of his advisers. He still stands by it.

Khrushchev's Excuse

After Mr. Khrushchev had gone to India and received a cool reception, following Mr. Eisenhower's own successful tour, there was no doubt he wanted to withdraw his invitation for a visit to Russia and to break up the summit conference. The U-2 gave him an excuse which he grabbed.

When he was in the United States, the Premier and Gen. Eisenhower got along fairly well. One day during his stay at Camp David he expressed a desire to drive around the countryside, and the President went with him. He let the Soviet leader do the talking while he listened. Mr. Khrushchev, of course, expressed confidence in his government. He estimated that the military efforts of Russia and the United States were about equal and thought that their costs were about half the amount the United States put annually into its defense.

Mr. Khrushchev talked about our surplus crops and said Socialist states had no surpluses, except for necessary reserves. He said all production of all kinds was intelligently re- this statement was made before the current severe famine in Communist China.

At Camp David, each man was firm in his position about the Paris conference. Mr. Khrushchev declared that a German

treaty had to be signed by May 27. The President replied quietly he could go ahead and sign a treaty, but that we would insist on our rights in Berlin and yield none of them. Furthermore, there would be no summit conference if the Russian leader proceeded with his announced plan.

He finally lifted the conditions, and the conference was scheduled in Paris. When this broke up after Mr. Khrushchev demanded an apology from Gen. Eisenhower which he refused, the Russian was not particularly violent at the last meeting. He made two long speeches outlining his reasons for withdrawing the invitation to the President to go to Russia.

On the so-called "spirit of Camp David," the General is unenthusiastic. Of course, such an expression implied that an atmosphere had been created in which all major problems

between the two countries had been settled and the rest of the way would be a downhill pull.

Sees No War

The President never believed or hinted this to be so—the phrase originated in Russia, not the United States, and first appeared in Russian publications. It was later picked up by American correspondents and received wide publicity. It did not accurately describe the mood at that time. It implied that all was good will.

Gen. Eisenhower feels Mr.

Khrushchev is unhappy now with the course of events. He does not know what the causes are, but speculates they come from opposition, both within the Kremlin and from Red China and Albania. He does not think we will have a nuclear war for obvious reasons, unless there is an unforeseen accident. Mr. Khrushchev does not want one.

The former President is constantly accosted by worried citizens, who want to know what he thinks about the future. He tries to answer them honestly and reassure them. He feels too

much emphasis has been put on fear in this country, perhaps due partly to propaganda and the great talk about shelters. He believes the American people will face up to any crisis and situation in the future, as they have in the past, with courage.

He thought the President made a very good statement on the possible need to resume testing of bombs. He knows we cannot afford to fall behind and must maintain our military strength. It seems the only way to develop and test an anti-missile device is in the atmosphere.

That is what the Russians have probably been doing. He is not too enthusiastic about spending vast sums now to get to the moon.

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